



## Schedule a Nontraditional Role Models Panel Presentation

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**Grades:** 11-12  
**Time:** One class period

### Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Discuss the possible barriers an employee may encounter in the workplace
- Understand various aspects of the work environment

Potential role models should be prescreened before you decide to include them on your nontraditional careers panel. Ask the questions below over the phone to determine if their answers convey:

- That they can do the job
- That they like their career choice
- That they can respond to questions about potential isolation and harassment on the job

If an individual appears to be negative about his/her job, the students will lose interest in what could be a perfect career choice for them. Never use a role model who has not been prescreened.

Role model panels should be informal and conversational to keep the students interested. Encourage panelists to be themselves and to give answers that are brief and specific. Provide each panelist with a copy of the questions in advance.

To begin the presentation, have each panelist talk for 5 to 7 minutes on his/her background and experiences in a nontraditional occupation; for example:

- What work did you do before entering your current nontraditional job?
- How did you find out about your nontraditional job?
- Why did you decide to enter a nontraditional job?
- What do you do during a typical day of work?
- What barriers have you faced and how have you overcome them?
- What are the salary, benefits, and career opportunities in this job?
- Describe any isolation or harassment you have experienced on the job and how you have handled/coped with it.
- When did you feel you had gained the respect on your job from your supervisor and coworkers?

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- Do you think having a support group, mentors, and or “survival skills” training would have made working in a nontraditional occupation easier for you?

Explain to the students that survival skills training includes how to deal with harassment, how to know if you are being discriminated against, access to employers’ and unions’ expectations of apprentices, and how to enable your family and friends to support your nontraditional career efforts.

Source: “Suggestions for Preparing NTO Role Model Panelists,” Wider Opportunities for Women, Inc.